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THE INFLUENCE OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY ON THE EARLY COMMENTARIES ON GENESIS¹

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"Hexaemeron" is the title of certain treatises and series of sermons written by the Fathers of the Christian church commenting on the story of the creation of the world as told in Genesis, sometimes a simple exegesis and sometimes an allegorical version of the scriptural story.² The use of the name may be extended to cover the whole body of literature dealing with the subject, including formal or incidental³ accounts of the creation of the world, based upon Genesis, and poetical versions of the narrative.

¹ Most of the authors cited in this paper are commentators on Genesis, and when a simple page reference is given, it is to be understood that it is to the commentary on Genesis of the author in question; for convenience, the Migne Greek and Latin *Patrologiae* have in most cases been cited. The following are to be noted:

Theophilus Antiochenus, Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras—in Otto's *Corpus Apologistarum Christianorum Saeculi Secundi*.

Philo, *De opificio mundi*—*Philonis Alexandrini opera*, Vol. I, edd. L. Cohn et P. Wendland, Berlin 1896–1906.

Philoponus, *De opificio mundi*, ed. Reichardt, Leipzig, 1897.

Bernardus Siluestris (of Tours), *De mundi universitate*, edd. Baruch et Wrobel, Innsbruck, 1876.

Thierry of Chartres, *Hexaemeron*; the portion published by B. Hauréau, *Notices et extraits de quelques manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, 1900, I, 52 ff.

Giraldus Cambrensis, *Symbolum electorum*, and Alexander Neckam, *De naturis rerum*, in the Rolls Series.

Vincent of Beauvais is cited in the Douai edition of 1624, and Du Bartas' *Première semaine* in the Elizabethan English translation of Sylvester. Montfaucon's paging of the *Cosmographia* of Cosmas Indicopleustes is cited, and *Lit.*, *Man.*, and *Lib. imp.* refer respectively to the *De Genesi ad litteram*, *De Genesi contra Manichaeos*, and *Liber imperfectus de Genesi* of Augustine.

² Strictly the name should be ἡ Ἑξαήμερος [sc. κοσμοποιία, δημιουργία], but the neuter form came into use in connection with Basil's work. The first occurrence of the word is probably in Philo, *Leg. All.* 93, 8; it is found also in Theophilus, *Ad. Autol.* II, 12, and later *passim*.

³ E.g., the late Greek and Byzantine chronologies frequently began with a chapter on creation, as did Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*.

The works of this class extend in time from the *De opificio mundi* of Philo Judaeus (cir. 40 A.D.) to Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

As is the case with other classes of literary composition, so the Hexaemera tended to conform to certain types established by a few pioneers. Subsequent authors not only followed the general outlines that had been laid down by the greater writers, and reproduced their topics, but even copied their phraseology. Imitation is commoner in this branch of literature than in almost any other, and the majority of the Hexaemera are consequently lacking in originality.

At the same time the Hexaemeral writers were also consciously or unconsciously under the influences that came from without, from philosophy and science. The men of the early church, compelled to meet the arguments of pagans, had to make their own accounts capable of standing the test of scrutiny; and often, going beyond a mere defense of their faith, they attempted to prove that the Christian doctrines, including those of Genesis, are in agreement with the best pagan thought or superior to it. As the church acquired power, the polemic tone grew sharper. Moreover, the mingling of philosophical material with that furnished by the sacred text took place the more easily because many of the great Fathers had been educated in pagan surroundings and personally accepted whatever of science and philosophy did not conflict with their religion. The philosophical elements which in this way became incorporated in the tradition form the subject of the present discussion.

Plato is the first of the philosophers notably to influence Hexaemeral thought. Although the pre-Socratics devoted most of their energies to the study of material Nature, very little trace of them, in scattered citations, is found in the tradition. They tended toward materialistic views, and according to them Deity took little or no part in the making of the universe. Plato, however, in this important point agreed with the Christians. In the *Timaeus*, although that dialogue cannot be asserted to be the formal expression of his own literal belief,⁴ he presented for the first time an

⁴ How seriously Plato took the *Timaeus* is a question that cannot be answered exactly, but whether he introduced the Demiurge as a purely mythical figure, or had

account of the creation of the world by a Deity who orders it for its own best advantage.⁵

In addition the *Timaeus* gives a plausible account of the material world, and it is a fundamental principle of the dialogue that material things conform to a-priori ideal forms and ultimately to the best possible ideals. The philosophical schools took it to be the formulation of Plato's deepest thought and it was used as the basis of their theories.

Introducing the cosmological portion of the dialogue, Plato states the principles on which his theories are based, a part of the work which was especially well known. Things are either conceptual, and eternally, changelessly existent, or they are sensible and subject to becoming and perishing (27D ff.). Everything that becomes must have some cause (28A), and if the artificer of the thing looks to a pattern that is changeless, the result is fair;

some measure of belief in a Deity, his feeling in the dialogue is certainly lofty and religious. The question was much discussed in ancient times whether Plato actually believed in a creation in time, or presented it as such in the *Timaeus* for literary and pedagogical reasons. See Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen*, II, 1, 792; Archer-Hind on *Tim.* 30A; Paul Shorey, *A.J.P.* X, 48. The Hexaemeral writers understood him to believe in a creation in time.

⁵ The teleological principle does not appear first in Plato, but he was the first to make it all important in his cosmology and to ascribe creation to a personal, reasoning, feeling Deity (with the reservation indicated in the preceding note). The pre-Socratics uniformly looked upon "creation" as the evolution of the world from chaos to a better state, without, however, making the development a purposed process. Heraclitus made the advance of stating that cosmic action depends upon law; cf. Bann, *The Greek Philosophers*, I, 24-25; Zeller, I, 2, 663 ff. Diogenes of Apollonia asserted that the first principle must be capable of thought because "if one is willing to consider, one would find that things (like day, night, summer, winter, rain, wind, and fair weather) are arranged in the best possible way," and without reason such an arrangement could not have been made (Diog. Ap. *ap. Simp. Phys.*, 152, 11 ff.). But his reason-endowed first principle is air, which pervades all things; and like the other pre-Socratics, Diogenes seems to have lost himself in mechanical speculations as to the air. The reasoning element could not in any case have been characterized like the Demiurge. The teleological idea however was discussed at the time of Diogenes, as is shown by the passages (Xen. *Comm.* i, 4; iv, 3) treated by S. O. Dickerman, *De argumentis quibusdam e structura hominis et animalium petitis* (Halle, 1909), and there seems to have been a treatise by an author as yet unknown on the providential arrangement of the parts of the human body; cf. also J. Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, 349. For later antiquity, however, and for the authors we are considering, it is clear that Plato is most often the ultimate source for the teleological ideas.

if he looks to the created as a pattern, the result is not fair. The world is visible and tangible, and is therefore the product of becoming; it must therefore have a creator (28B).⁶ But it is a hard task to discover the maker and founder of this world, and having discovered him it is impossible to tell of him to all men; and therefore Plato turns to the examination of the pattern used by the Demiurge (28C). Since the world is fair and the Demiurge good, the pattern must have been an eternal one (29A). Now the reason why the creator made this world is that he is good, and therefore can begrudge nothing, but wishes to liken everything as nearly as possible to himself (29E). He therefore took the chaotic mass of matter⁷ and brought it into order, this being better than disorder (30A). But the creator must always act for the best; finding then that that which has reason is always better than that which has not, and that reason cannot exist without soul, he made this universe a living creature with soul and mind (30B). The pattern then is an ideal living thing, embracing in itself all ideal beings, just as the world contains all material beings; it is the fairest of ideas and in every respect perfect (30CD), and it is one, for if there were two or more such, there would be a still higher idea that would embrace them.

The influence of this portion of the *Timaeus* upon the Hexaemera was immense. It is not necessary to assert that teleology came into Christian literature from Plato alone, but it must be conceded that the *Timaeus* is the first great cosmology wherein design plays the chief rôle, and that in the Genesis story as it stands the notion of preconception in the divine mind is not present. Certainly many of the Hexaemeral writers employed Platonic material in their interpretation of Genesis.

To be more specific, we find in Plato the idea that God is changelessly good and can perform only the best acts (29E-30A), and it is likewise a Platonic principle that God cannot be the cause

⁶ Philo 3, 17 ff. uses this argument; his introduction is much like Plato's, but with Stoic elements.

⁷ The so-called "secondary matter," said by Zeller, II, 1, 730 (following him Bäumker, *Das Problem der Materie*, Münster, 1890, 142 ff.), to be among the mythological elements of the *Timaeus*.

of anything evil.⁸ His goodness is the reason for creation (29E). All these thoughts are common topics of the Hexaemera, especially the last. It is directly quoted by Philo and Philoponus and occurs as part of the tradition throughout its course.⁹ The idea that God cannot be the cause of evil appears in various connections in the Hexaemeral literature.¹⁰ In the polemic against astrology we find the argument that if the stars presage evil the blame for the latter must fall upon their maker, God, and this is impossible.¹¹ Nor would our writers admit that God is the cause of the harm done by animals, poisonous plants and reptiles, or thorns; they escape all these difficulties by saying that man's sin was the cause of all.¹²

The assertion that there is an ideal pattern is echoed throughout the Hexaemera in various forms and developments, all of them to be traced ultimately to the *Timaeus* as the source. The "intelligible world" of Philo Judaeus is directly suggested by the pattern in the *Timaeus*, although the two are by no means identical. For Plato, the pattern is the idea of the living thing, independently

⁸ *Tim.* 42DE; *Rep.* 379B, 617E.

⁹ Philo 6, 13; Philoponus 273, 4; 240, 16; Basil 9A; Origen *De prin.* II, 9, 6; Chrysostom *Hom. in Gen.* III, 3, p. 35; Maximus *ap.* Euthymius I, 6; Athenagoras *De resurr.* 12; pseudo-Eucherius 895B; Honorius of Autun *Elucidarium* 1112C; Theodoretus *Qu. in Gen.* I, 4; Thierry of Chartres *Hex.* 52; Peter Lombard *Sent.* II, 1, 3; Hildebert of Le Mans 1218A; Erigena *De div. nat.* III, 2; Arnold of Chartres 1515B; Augustine *DCD* XI, 21 (citing Plato). Cf. R. Gottwald *De Gregorio Nazianzeno Platonico*, Breslau, 1906, 25.

¹⁰ It was found in the pseudo-Salomonic Wisdom; Zeller III, 2, 293 and n. 5. See also Greg. Nyss., *Hex.* 81D; Philoponus 300, 2 ff.; Odo *De pecc. orig.* in *Max. Bibl. patr.* XXI, 228; Arnold of Chartres 1539D. Philo 25, 8 ff. (cf. *De conf. linguarum* 263, 8 ff. C-W), asserting this principle to show that God could not create the evil elements in man, but left them to the angels, is directly reminiscent of *Tim.* 42DE ff. See also Gottwald *op. cit.* 26.

¹¹ Basil 132D; Ambrose 196B; Augustine *Lit.* II, 17, 35.

¹² Theophilus *ad Autolycum* II, 17, p. 106; Chrysostom IX, 4, p. 79; Theodoretus *Qu. in Gen.* I, 18; Procopius 108A; Augustine *Man.* I, 18, *Lit.* III, 18; pseudo-Eucherius 900A, 901C; Beda *Com.* 196C, 200A, *Hex.* 31D; Hugo of St. Victor 37D; Neckam *De naturis rerum* II, 156; Abelard *Hex.* 750D, 767B; Honorius *Hex.* 258D; Angelomus 120B, 122B; Peter Lombard II, 15, 3; Rupert of Deutz 231B; Vincent of Beauvais, *Spec. hist.* I, 29; Albertus Magnus, *Summa de creat.* IV, 73, 5, 8; Bruno 156A; Peter Comestor 1062D, 1064A. For the idea that the rose at first had no thorns, and the like, see Milton, *P.L.* IV, 256: "Flowers of all hue and without thorn the rose;" Basil 105B; Ambrose 175C; pseudo-Eustathius 716B; Glyca 45A.

existing; while for Philo, the intelligible world is the ideal counterpart of the material world,¹³ and it is definitely stated that God made it.¹⁴ Philo was influenced by the Stoic doctrines also in this matter (*infra*, p. 232). It is in essentially the Philonic form that the doctrine of the pattern is found in the Fathers, among whom Origen may be especially mentioned. The neo-Platonists passed on the doctrine of the pattern-world to Augustine, and from his time until the middle of the twelfth century the latter was the dominating force in Christian interpretation of Genesis. At that time Platonic influence was again felt, particularly in connection with this topic; but the Christians were always loath to say that the pattern is an independently existing idea.

Another important line of Platonic influence is the notion that matter in itself resists the efforts of the Demiurge and his assistants to carry out their plans for its better ordering.¹⁵ In the latter part of the dialogue, wherein the nature and affections of the human soul and body are discussed (68E ff.), the constantly-recurring motive is the contrast of the divinely made reason with the mortal portion of the soul and the mortal body—products of Necessity—and the disorder which they cause, in spite of the efforts of the helpers of the Demiurge to make the human economy as perfect as possible. This natural perversity of matter forms a metaphysical limitation on the power of the Demiurge. Similar limitation is indicated by Philo (7, 5 ff.) when he says that matter in itself is too weak to receive all the benefits that the power of God could bestow; and after many centuries the theme of the resistance of matter to the divine will again became prominent in the *De mundi universitate* of Bernard of Tours.

The doctrines concerning time in the *Timaeus* (37C–39E) are closely connected with the topic outlined above. The Demiurge wished to make the world still more like its pattern, but the pattern is eternal (*αἰώνιος*), and a thing generated cannot from this very

¹³ E.g., he includes the ideas of earth, heaven, air, and space, 9, 4 ff. Cf. Paul Shorey, *Unity of Plato's Thought* 37, n. 256.

¹⁴ Plato hints at this; *Rep.* 597C; *Tim.* 34A8. He does not, however, develop it as a doctrine.

¹⁵ Plato calls this resistance Necessity. Cf. 37D, 42A, 48A, 69B, 86E; Paul Shorey, *A.J.P.* X, 61 f., on *Tim.* 48A; J. Adam, *op. cit.* 361.

fact be eternal. Therefore time, the image of eternity, moving in regular mathematical intervals was created, and the luminaries were made to mark off its periods. Time was therefore made together with the universe and did not previously exist (38B). Similarly in the *Hexaemera* eternity is distinguished from time¹⁶ and the statement is made that time did not exist before creation.¹⁷ In connection with this came the idea that God is not in time, a principle of which Augustine and his followers made use in answering the questions how God came to create the world so late, how an immutable God could be moved at any time to create, and what God did before creation.

The remaining portions of the *Timaetus* furnished certain Hexaemeral topics, although they are cited less frequently than the parts outlined above. After the discussion of the pattern, Plato proceeds to say that the world is material, and in order to be visible must contain fire, and to be tangible, earth (31B).¹⁸ But in order to make a proportion there had to be four elements (31C), and from the fact that they are in proportion the elements are held together by a bond of friendship (32C).¹⁹ The elaborate mathematical theory of the derivation of the elements from space exercised no influence on the *Hexaemera*, yet the accounts of the development of the elements from the primal chaos, as given by the Platonizing writers of the twelfth century, Bernard of Tours and Thierry of Chartres, clearly owe much to this portion of the *Timaetus*. Plato eventually derives matter from space, but in several passages (30A, 52D ff.) he speaks of matter ("secondary matter," p. 221, n. 7) as existing in chaotic form before creation, the

¹⁶ Hugo of Amiens says that God precedes the world by eternity, not by time (1249B). Honorius *De imagine mundi* II, 1 applies *aeuum* to God alone; *tempora aeterna*, beginning before the world and continuing with it and after it, to the *archetypus mundus* and to the angels; *tempus* to the world. He calls the latter *umbra aevi* (cf. *Tim.* 37D). Cf. Peter Comestor 1056A, pseudo-Eustathius 720B.

¹⁷ Philo 8, 5 ff.; Origen *Hom. in Gen.* 147A; Basil 13B; Ambrose 132A; Augustine *Lit.* V, 5, *Man.* I, 2; Du Bartas, p. 2, in Sylvester's translation; Hugo of St. Victor 34A; Beda *Com.* 204B; Hrabanus 444B, 453B; Remi of Auxerre 54D; Peter Lombard II, 2, 4; Bandinus II, 2; Giraldus Camb. 345; Arnold of Chartres 1516A; Vincent of Beauvais, *Spec. hist.* I, 2; Peter Comestor *loc. cit.*

¹⁸ Cited by Philoponus 78, 26; 119, 1; Basil 25A; Augustine *Lit.* III, 4, 6.

¹⁹ Cf. Basil 33A.

"nurse" of material things taking on one form after another (52D), and the four elements as it were having traces of their own forms (53B). The early Hexaemeral writers had not implied that in the first-made chaos the elements were not present in their proper forms.²⁰ Bernard, however, speaks of a material first principle, *hyle*, existing in a state of confusion, taking on one quality after another, although the constant change centers about the forms of the four elements: *erat hyle naturae uultus antiquissimus, generationis uterus indefessus, formarum prima subiectio, materia corporum, substantiae fundamentum irrequieta est nec potuit hyle meminisse quando uel nascentium formis uel occidentium refluxionibus intermissius adiretur et quod figurarum omnium susceptione conuertitur, nullius suae formae signaculo specialiter insignitur. uerum quoquo pacto frenata est licentia discursandi, ut elementorum firmioribus inniteretur substantiis eisque quaternis uelut radicibus inhaereret materies inquieta* (*De mundi universitate* 10, 47 ff.). Noys, the "mind" of God, brings the four elements out of the confusion and the present world is developed. Thierry (*Hex.* 60-61) has reference to the same passages of the *Timaeus* when he defines the *informitas* of Gen. 1:2 as the *hyle* or chaos of the philosophers. Such was the *informitas* that little or no difference between the elements could be perceived, and this difference was overlooked by the philosophers; but Plato saw it and declared that the confusion of the elements underlay the elements, not as preceding them in time, but as confusion precedes separation.

In *Timaeus* 32C ff. the nature, shape, and motion of the material world is discussed, and with 34C the topic of the world soul is taken up. Though there is but one slight allusion to Plato's elaborate account of its making,²¹ it is probable that even in early

²⁰ Descriptions of chaos as a confusion of already developed elements are sometimes difficult to distinguish from the Platonic chaos about to be described. This is perhaps due partially to Ovid *Met.* I, 15 ff.: *utque erat et tellus illic et pontus et aer, | sic erat instabilis tellus, innabilis unda, | lucis egens aer. nulli sua forma manebat.* The later lines *nam caelo terras et terris abscidit undas | et liquidum spisso secreuit ab aere caelum* however show that the chaos was made up of the elements. Du Bartas follows this passage, first stating that God made the elements and then that they lacked their present characteristics. There are also descriptions of a primary matter like the substrate of Aristotle, mere potentiality; cf. Vincent of Beauvais *Spec. hist.* I, 16.

²¹ Justin *Apol.* I, chap. 60.

times certain Christians identified Plato's world soul and the Spirit of God in Gen. 1:2, for Jerome found it necessary to deny the identity of the two.²² Further protests were made by the more orthodox writers of the twelfth century,²³ but their contemporaries Abelard, Thierry of Chartres, and Bernard of Tours, under the influence of the revival of Platonism at that time, were believers in the world soul.²⁴

In 41A ff. the Demiurge addresses the gods.²⁵ The gods are not immortal, but shall never be destroyed without the consent of the Demiurge: to make the world complete, three other classes of beings (the inhabitants respectively of the air, earth, and water, since the gods are conceived of as fiery)²⁶ must be created (41B), but if the Demiurge himself made them they would be the equals of the gods. The immortal part of the soul therefore was made by the Demiurge, while his helpers fashioned the mortal portion and the body.

The remainder of the dialogue discusses psychology, the derivation of the elements from primary space, the properties of matter

²² *Hebr. Qu. in Gen.* 987B ff.: *ex quo intellegimus non de spiritu mundi dici, ut nonnulli arbitrantur, sed de spiritu sancto, qui et ipse uiuificator omnium a principio dicitur* (cited by Strabus Gloss. Ord. 70B). Augustine's (earlier) attitude was more liberal; *Lib. imp.* 4, 17: *potest autem et aliter intellegi, ut spiritum dei, uitalem creaturam, qua uiuersus iste uisibilis mundus atque omnia corporea continentur et mouentur, intellegamus, cui deus omnipotens tribuit uim quandam sibi seruiendi ad operandum in iis quae gignuntur*. Jerome's objection might include in its application those whose belief was tinctured with Stoicism; *infra*, p. 235.

²³ Rupert of Deutz 205D (mentioning Plato); Hugo of Amiens 1255A; Angelomus 116A; Peter Comestor 1057A.

²⁴ Abelard believed that Plato and his school held an essentially Christian doctrine of the Trinity; cf. *Theol. Chr.* I, v., especially 1144A; *Intr. ad theol.* I, xvii-xx. But in *Hex.* 735B ff. he said that "spirit of God" might be simply wind. Thierry, discussing Gen. 1:2, says that Plato called the spirit the world soul and the Christians the Holy Spirit (*Hex.* 61-62). Bernard (*De mund. uniu.* 13, 147 ff.) describes the making of the world soul in language highly reminiscent of the *Timaeus*, deriving it, however, like the neo-Platonists, from the Noys by emanation. William of Conches to some extent shared these opinions (cf. K. Werner, "Wilhelms von Auvergne Verhältniss zu den Platonikern des xii. Jahrhunderts," *Sitzb. d. Ak. Wiss., Phil.-Hist. Kl.*, Wien, 74, 135) and mentions them in *De phil. mundi* 45D.

²⁵ Citations in Abelard 747A; Neckam 22; Philoponus 134, 24.

²⁶ Cf. 39E, which is probably the source for the statements assigning one kind of being to each element, as Honorius *De imagine mundi* I, 3; Philo 51, 14-15; Giraldus Cambr. 343. Augustine *Lit.* III, 9 ascribes this view to *quidam philosophi*.

as dependent upon the shape of the elementary corpuscles, and the physiology of man, all of which may be dismissed after the discussion of a few special topics that made their way into the *Hexaemera*. Philo's passage in praise of sight and light (*De op. mund.* 17, 11 ff.) is based upon *Timaeus* 47A ff.; the statement of Philoponus (140, 5 ff.) that Plato assigned the cubical shape to the earth corpuscle is a reminiscence of *Tim.* 55D; and there are references to Plato's assertion that there are two kinds of fire—that which burns, and that which does not burn but gives off light;²⁷ as well as to the statement that coagulated blood becomes flesh and sinew (*Tim.* 82C).²⁸ Philoponus (122, 24) remarks that in the universe we cannot properly speak of "up and down" but only of "center and circumference," possibly with reference to *Tim.* 62C ff., though he was familiar with Aristotle and could have found the same in *De caelo* 268b, 20. Plato however is probably the source for the topic that man is erect in stature and thereby shows his kinship with heaven, while the beasts are inclined toward the earth.²⁹

While the *Timaeus* is the prime source of Platonic influence among the Fathers, certain topics can be traced to other dialogues. Among these is the idea quoted from Pindar in *Theaetetus* 173E, that the mind can traverse the universe independently of the body.³⁰ Again, the very common comparison of man, the microcosm, to the universe is suggested in several Platonic passages, notably *Philebus* 29A ff., where Socrates, having shown that the body of man is composed of the four elements, drawn from the four elements in

²⁷ Basil 121C; Ambrose 191D; Philoponus 76, 7 ff.; Neckam I, 71. Cf. *Tim.* 45B, 58C.

²⁸ Basil 168A; Philoponus 119, 16 ff.; Procopius 105D; Theodosius Melitenus 4, 3.

²⁹ *Tim.* 90A, 92A ff. The notion is found before Plato in Xen. *Comm.* i, 4, 11. How common it was may be seen from the citations collected by S. O. Dickerman, *op. cit.*, 92 ff., to which should be added Alcimus Avitus; Ambrose 245D; Philoponus 269, 5; Augustine *Man.* I, 17, *Lib. imp.* 16, 60; Freculphus *Chron.* I, 3; Glyca 172A (citing Greg. Nyss.); pseudo-Eucherius 901A; Beda *Hex.* 29D, *Com.* 205C; Giraldus Camb. 348; Hrabanus 460C; Angelomus 122D; Wandalbert 639A; Rupert of Deutz 267D; Procopius 117B; Bernard of Tours 55, 27 ff.; Basilus Seleuc. 36AB; Peter Comestor 1063D. Ovid *Met.* I, 84–86 is often cited in this connection but is evidently not the ultimate source of the topic.

³⁰ Philo 23, 12 ff.; Ambrose 259C and *Ep.* 43, 15 (the latter cited by Cohn-Wendland, *Philonis Alex. op.* I, LXXX); Pisides 738 ff.; Du Bartas, 166 in Sylvester's translation.

the universe, suggests that the soul of man may be drawn from the soul of the universe.³¹ In *Tim.* 44D the shape of the head is compared to that of the universe, and in 81A the whole body is said to work on the same principles as those of the universe.

Plato is accorded respectful treatment, in general, by the Hexaemeral writers. There were, however, certain Platonic assumptions that the church could not accept, especially the theory of the eternity of matter,³² the doctrine of metempsychosis, which Origen was accused of holding,³³ and the theory that the ideal pattern of creation is independent of God.³⁴

With the exception of Philo and the Platonizing Christians of the twelfth century our writers show their familiarity with the *Timaeus* by quotation rather than by weaving it into their work. Even Philoponus, who quotes the *Timaeus* more frequently than any other Hexaemeral writer, seldom passes beyond quotation. But Platonism in its derivative forms, as has been said above,

³¹ Cf. Philo 51, 6 ff.; Honorius *Elucid.* 1116B ff.; Giraldus Camb. 347; Bernard of Tours 55, 15 ff.; Arnold of Chartres 1528B ff. In a somewhat different form, comparing man and the universe in parts other than the four elements, the topic is found in the Jewish non-canonical books. Cf. also Ambrose 265A ff.; Honorius *Hex.* 258C ff., pseudo-Eustathius 749A ff.; Wandalbert 639A; Remi of Auxerre 57B; Raleigh I, 2, 5; Bernard of Tours *passim*. On the origin of the topic see Lobeck *Aglaophamus* II, 921 ff.

³² The Christians probably had in mind the passages concerned with "secondary matter"; see Bäumker, *op. cit.* 143. Theophilus II, 4, p. 54 in a polemical passage mentions the Platonists especially, and in other passages of the same sort Plato probably shares the polemic with the Epicureans and pagan philosophy generally. Cf. Basil 8A; Ambrose 123A; Lactantius *Inst.* II, 8, 8; Origen *Com. in Gen.* 48A; Augustine *Man.* I, 6; Rupert of Deutz 202C; Anastasius Sinaita 857C; Procopius *Com. in Gen.* 29A ff.; Greg. Naz. *Poemata dogmatica* IV, 3-4; Maximus *ap. Eus. Praep. ev.* VII, 22 ff. The Latin writers of the Middle Ages often repeated the statement of Ambrose (123A), that Gen. 1:1 refutes Plato, who had three principles, God, the pattern, and matter, and Aristotle, who had three, matter, form, and the *operatorium*; cf. Remi 53D; Peter Lombard II, 1, 1; Bandinus II, 1; Hugo of Amiens 1251A; Hugo of St. Victor 33B; Arnold of Chartres 1515A; Peter Comestor 1055B (who adds Epicurus).

³³ Origen was strenuously opposed by Arnold of Chartres 1522A; Gregory of Nazianzus (*Poem. dog.* VII, 7) opposes metempsychosis. Cf. Glyca 148B; Rupert of Deutz 266B.

³⁴ Cf. Ambrose 124B, followed by Rupert of Deutz I, 1; Theodoretus 104A (mentioning Plato).

became an integral part of Augustine's interpretation, and through the latter to a certain extent colored all later thought.

The reason for the limited knowledge of Plato in the Hexaemeral tradition is the lapse of Greek learning in the Middle Ages. From the time of Augustine the western church knew the *Timaeus* only in translation and in citation; and during the Middle Ages the translation of Chalcidius,³⁵ which extends only through 53C, and that of Cicero³⁶ were the sole sources with the exception of such information as could be gained from citations in Augustine and the materials furnished by Macrobius, Boethius, and the *De dogmate Platonis* of Apuleius. It seems probable that Augustine did not use the Greek text but the translation of Victorinus.³⁷ Abelard, who had some knowledge of Greek, knew Plato indirectly.³⁸

A contributory cause for the respect that is shown for Plato by the Christian writers was the belief prevalent in early times that he was acquainted with the Hebrew sacred literature and drew therefrom. This belief was founded upon the actual or supposed agreements between Plato and the Scriptures, and seems first to have been expressed by Aristobulus.³⁹ Philo asserted that the Hebrew literature was the source of Greek philosophy⁴⁰ and the early Christians said that Plato borrowed from the Bible.⁴¹ This is common in Philoponus,⁴² and Augustine reports that certain

³⁵ See Wrobel, *Plat. Timaeus interprete Chalcidio*, pp. xii ff. Ueberweg-Heinze, *Gesch. d. Phil.* II, 172; De Wulf, *Hist. de la phil. médiévale* (2d ed.), 150. Gunzo of Novara (d. 967) seems to have carried a copy of this translation into Germany (see G. Becker, *Catalogi Bibliothecarum Antiqui*, Bonn, 1885, 64). The short commentary by William of Conches is founded on Chalcidius.

³⁶ Becker, *op. cit.* 201, indicates that Cicero's translation was in the library at Bec.

³⁷ Boissier, *La fin du paganisme*, I, 307.

³⁸ S. M. Deutsch, *Peter Abaelard*, 58; McCabe, *Peter Abelard*, 86-87, 120.

³⁹ *Ap. Euseb. Praep. ev.* XIII, 12 ff.; see Zeller III, 2, 277 ff. Hermippus had previously declared that Greek philosophers drew from Hebrew sources; Zeller III, 1, 302, n. 1.

⁴⁰ Zeller III, 2, 393-94, and notes.

⁴¹ Justin Martyr *Apol.* I, 59-60, says that Plato took his conception of chaotic matter from Gen., chap. I, and the division of the world soul (*Tim.* 36B) from the narrative of the setting up of the cross by Moses in the wilderness.

⁴² Philoponus 273, 4 ff. claims that *Tim.* 29E is derived from the Bible; the same is asserted (78, 15 ff.) of *Tim.* 30A; of *Tim.* 41B (4, 25; 134, 24 ff.); and of *Tim.* 37C (303, 27 ff.).

Christians thought that Plato met the prophet Jeremiah in Egypt. He points out, however, that this was chronologically impossible⁴³ and without stating that Plato and his followers knew the Scriptures simply says "None approach us nearer than they."⁴⁴ Nevertheless in the middle ages Peter Comestor believed that Plato read the Mosaic books in Egypt and confounded the spirit of God (Gen. 1:2) with the world soul.⁴⁵

No one work of Aristotle, like the *Timaeus* of Plato, was the source of Aristotelian influence on the Hexaemera; much philosophical and scientific material, however, was drawn from his writings, and during the period when he was the dominating philosopher Aristotelian authority is constantly cited. It would be an endless and profitless task to point out all the Aristotelian elements in the Hexaemera, and we shall therefore consider but a few of the more important lines of his influence.

It has already been stated that the Platonic theory of the elements, with its elaborate mathematical demonstration, was not employed by the Hexaemeral writers. The simpler Aristotelian theory of the interaction of the elements by means of their like qualities however was generally adopted. In *De generatione et corruptione* ii, 4 Aristotle assigns two qualities out of the four, hot-cold, wet-dry, to each element, opposites never being joined. Fire is hot and dry; air, hot and wet; water, cold and wet; earth, cold and dry. When the dryness of the fire overcomes the wetness of the air the two merge, and through such an intermediate change an element can unite with the one, both of whose qualities are opposite to its own. Similar explanations of interaction are frequently made in the Hexaemera.⁴⁶ We also find mention of

⁴³ DCD, VIII, 11. Augustine says that he had formerly believed the report and had included it in his writings (i.e., *De doctr. Chr.* II, 28).

⁴⁴ DCD, VIII, 5.

⁴⁵ Peter Comestor 1057A: *hunc locum male intellexit Plato dictum hoc putans de anima mundi*; cf. Rupert of Deutz 205D. Other passages of Peter Comestor (e.g., 1061D, 1066C) similarly accuse Plato of mistaking the meaning of the Scriptures.

⁴⁶ Basil 89C ff.; Ambrose 163D ff.; Chalcidius *Com. in Tim.* 316; Honorius *De im. mund.* I, 3; Du Bartas, 31, in Sylvester's translation; Philoponus 180, 19 ff.; Bernard of Tours 62. 50 ff.; Giraldu Camb. 343. But Cosmas 123 ff. contests the theory.

Aristotle's doctrines of qualities and the substrate,⁴⁷ and of the fifth element,⁴⁸ and his division of the soul into its various faculties;⁴⁹ and the *Historia animalium* is a source of some of the stories about animals found in the *Physiologus*, the compilation used by Basil and his followers. Augustine (*Lit.* V, 21, 42) mentions with disapproval the doctrine that the upper regions are under divine guidance, while the lower are subject to disordered, fortuitous motion, doubtless with reference to Aristotle. The criticism was made both by pagans and by Christians that according to Aristotle God did not concern himself with the government of the lower world,⁵⁰ and Aristotle may therefore be criticized in the polemics of the Christians against the notion that the world is uncreated and eternal, or self-developed,⁵¹ a doctrine which would naturally be attributed also to the Epicureans.

Although the Stoics were materialists, their influence upon the Hexaemeral writers, direct or indirect, was considerable. They divided the world into the passive principle, formless matter, and the active principle, the logos in it, God.⁵² The latter to be sure is not an intelligible being, but is spoken of as "technical fire"; it receives, however, the attribute of providence and plays the part of reason (logos) in the world.⁵³ In the Hexaemera likewise contrasts are made in the Stoic fashion between the active and the passive.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ Zeller II, 2, 315 ff.; references to the Aristotelian and neo-Platonic principle that the two are separable only in thought are frequently found. Origen *De prin.* IV, 1, 33; Basil 21A.

⁴⁸ Basil 25B; Ambrose 134C; Anastasius Sin. 858A; Bernard of Tours 38, 80 ff.; Vincent of Beauvais *Spec. nat.* III, 3.

⁴⁹ Aristotle *De anim.* 414 a29 ff. enumerates five (vegetative, sensory, logical, appetitive, motor) of which the first three are mentioned by our authors; Greg. Nyss. *De hom. op.* 144D ff.; Procopius 117C.

⁵⁰ Aristotle held that the ether, of which the upper regions are composed, is involved in a circular motion, but that the very nature of the elements necessitates other and less regular movement in the lower regions; cf. *De caelo* 292 b22 ff.; Zeller II, 2, 437-39, 468. For the criticism of Aristotle by pagans and Christians, see Zeller *ibid.* 468, n. 1, also Plut. *De defectu orac.* 423D.

⁵¹ Cf. Philo 2, 12 ff.

⁵² Diog. Laer. VII, 134.

⁵³ Heinze, *Die Lehre vom Logos*, 83-84.

⁵⁴ Fire and air are said to be active, earth and water passive; Augustine *Lit.* III, 10; Lactant. *Inst.* II, 9, 21; cf. Plut. *De com. not.* 49, 1, p. 1085; Nemes. *De nat. hom.* 5, 164 Matth.; Cic. *Acad.* i. 26. Philo 2, 16 ff., and Basil 33B use Stoic language in the contrast of the activity of God with the passivity of matter.

The most important influence of the Stoics, however, came in their doctrine of the *logos* in its various forms. When Philo, adopting the Platonic theory of an ideal pattern of the universe, stated that this pattern existed in the divine reason, he employed the Stoic term *logos*, which they had used to signify the reason of man (a part, as they held, of the universal *logos* mentioned above) both when it remains in man's breast (*ἐνδιάθετος*) and when it is expressed in speech (*προφορικός*).⁵⁵ Philo calls the ideal pattern of the world God's *logos*, on the analogy of human reason,⁵⁶ and Theophilus of Antioch says that the Son, the *Logos* of God, was *ἐνδιάθετος* before the creation, but *προφορικός* when he goes forth to be the agent of creation.⁵⁷ Theophilus does not speak of two *logoi*, but of the divine Word in two phases, first, abiding in God in eternity and so containing the ideas of all that God is to create, and second, sent forth by God as his means of communication and the instrument of creation (*Ad Autol.* II, 10, 80). He does not specifically state that the Word in its first state contains the world of ideas, but since he calls it God's "counsellor, mind, and intelligence" and says that God made heaven and earth through his word (*op. cit.* 80) we must assume that this was his meaning and that he agrees herein with Philo, whom indeed he probably follows.

Origen lays even more stress than Theophilus upon the phase of the Word called by the latter *ἐνδιάθετος*. The Word or Wisdom contains all the forms (*species*) of things to be created, whether substantial or accidental, and was itself created prior to these (*De princ.* I, 2, 131B). God's Wisdom never existed apart from him (*ibid.* IV, 1, 28). After Origen, the use of the terms Son,

⁵⁵ For a discussion of the terms see Heinze *op. cit.* 140 ff.

⁵⁶ Zeller (III, 2, 423-24) is probably right (against Heinze, *op. cit.* 231 ff.) in saying that Philo did not formally distinguish a divine *ἐνδιάθετος* and *προφορικός* *logos*. Philo uses the two terms with reference to the human mind.

⁵⁷ Theophilus II, 10, 78: "Ἐχων οὖν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λόγον ἐνδιάθετον ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις σπλαγχνοῖς ἐγέννησεν αὐτόν, κτλ. *Ibid.* 22, 118: Πρὸ γὰρ τι γίνεσθαι τοῦτον εἶχεν σύμβουλον, ἑαυτοῦ νοῦν καὶ φρόνησιν ὄντα. ὅποτε δὲ ἠθέλησεν ὁ θεὸς ποιῆσαι ὅσα ἐβουλεύσατο, τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ἐγέννησεν προφορικόν, . . . οὐ κενωθείς αὐτὸς τοῦ λόγου, ἀλλὰ λόγον γεννήσας καὶ τῷ λόγῳ αὐτοῦ διὰ παντὸς ὁμιλῶν. Cf. Athenagoras *Suppl.* 10 and 24; Tatian *Orat.* 5.

Word, and Wisdom, equivalent to logos, persisted throughout the course of the tradition.⁵⁸

Likewise the Stoic doctrine of σπερματικὸς λόγος, once it had been enunciated, found a place in some of the more important Hexaemera. This logos, as its name implies, was according to the Stoics a force in matter which brought about its development along certain determined lines in the same way that seeds develop. Used in the singular number, the term is applied to God, who remains in this form in the world, first bringing forth the four elements;⁵⁹ used in the plural number, it refers to certain powers that take over matter and give it form, and then remain in the world to perpetuate the species thus originated.⁶⁰ In the *De opificio mundi* of Philo there is a trace of this Stoic doctrine in the statement (13, 21 ff.) that the reproduction of plants is due to logoi which lie concealed in their germinal elements; the term σπερματικὸς λόγος, too, is found in Philo.⁶¹ After Philo the neo-Platonists adopted the idea. With Aristotle they held that matter and form are never separable,⁶² and they sometimes applied the term logos to the forms of matter, each a real concept, and distinguished, as in the Stoic and Philonic systems, by always being connected with the notion of energy.⁶³ Among the Christians, Augustine took the idea of seminal logoi and used it in connection with his peculiar explanation of the Hexaemeron. When God made all things together, therein were contained whatever things are in the universe—sun, moon, stars, earth, and water—and whatever was later developed out of them, in the same manner that the tree is contained in the seed (*Lit.* V, 23, 45). To this Augustine

⁵⁸ For Gregory of Nazianzus see R. Gottwald, *op. cit.* 28.

⁵⁹ Diog. Laer. VII, 136; Heinze, 111.

⁶⁰ Heinze 114 and n. 2. The logoi are spoken of both absolutely and as being contained in God; *Plac.* I, 7, 33.

⁶¹ See Heinze 239 ff.

⁶² Plot. *Enn.* IV, 3, 9: δεῖ δὲ τῷ λόγῳ τὴν εἰσοδὸν καὶ τὴν ἐμψύχωσιν διδασκαλίας καὶ τοῦ σαφοῦς χάριν γίνεσθαι νομίζειν. ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἦν ὅτε οὐκ ἐψυχῶτο τότε τὸ πᾶν· οὐδ' ἐν ἦν ὅτε σῶμα ὑφειστήκει ψυχῆς ἀπουσίας, οὐδὲ ὅλη ποτὲ ὅτε ἀκόσμητος ἦν· ἀλλὰ ἐκινῆσθαι τὰ πάντα χωρίζοντας αὐτὰ ἀπ' ἀλλήλων οἶόν τε.

⁶³ Heinze 318; Zeller III, 2, 609 and n. 7. Here again the first forms produced are said to be the elements.

joins the statement that formless matter precedes form not in time but only in origin. He denotes the subjects of the first creation variously by the terms *aeternae rationes* (*Lit.* IV, 24, 41), *causales rationes* (*ibid.* VI, 14, 15; VII, 22, 23; cf. *causaliter conditus* VI, 9; *ratio creandi hominis* VI, 9), *causae* (VI, 11, 15, 18), *primordiales causae* (VI, 10), *rationes primordiales* (VI, 11), *elementa* (VI, 10), *primae causae* (VI, 15). The use of the term *ratio*, which often means "idea," shows probably that the general notion came to Augustine from the neo-Platonists, but he constantly returns to the comparison with the seed, which is more akin to Stoicism. In his belief that in this manner the first creation contained all things both in substance and in the forms of their various species Augustine differed radically from many of the commentators of the Middle Ages, who held that the substance of all things was created at once but that they were distinguished into their various species in the course of the six days.

Traces of this logos doctrine are likewise to be found in the Greek Fathers. In Basil, it occurs in the notion that the commands of God create the nature of things⁶⁴ and that these divine commands remain in nature, and, for example, cause the earth to continue to bear fruits.⁶⁵ Gregory of Nyssa states even more explicitly the notion that God's commands create the nature of things and determine their natural modes of action which made up the so-called necessary causal sequences in this world (cf. *Hex.* 72C, 76B). This nature of things, made by God and distinguished by the terms *σοφός* and *τεχνικός*, he calls logos.⁶⁶ Gregory goes much farther in this matter than Basil; he has reference not simply to the seminal power implanted in the earth, sea, and animals, but to the beginnings, causes, and powers (*ἀφορμαί, αἰτίαι, δυνάμεις*, *Hex.* 72B) which God lodged in the world in the beginning and from which

⁶⁴ Cf. *Hex.* 81C (where it is stated that water received its property of flowing downhill from the command of God in 1:9): *θεοῦ φωνὴ φύσεώς ἐστι ποιητική.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 96A; the first command became a "law" of nature. Cf. 149C and 164C (the language in the latter passage is Stoic: *ἦλθε τὸ πρόσταγμα ὁδῶ βαδίζον;* cf. *Diog. Laer.* VII, 156); also 189C.

⁶⁶ *Hex.* 73A ff.: *ἀλλὰ χρη ἐκάστῳ τῶν ὄντων καὶ λόγον τινὰ σοφόν τε καὶ τεχνικὸν ἐγκείμενον πιστεύειν . . . τί οὖν εἶπεν ὁ θεός; ἐπειδὴ λόγον παραστατική ἐστιν ἡ τοιαύτη φωνή, θεοπρεπῶς οἶμαι νοήσομεν εἰς τὸν ἐγκείμενον τῆς κτίσεως λόγον τὸ ρητὸν ἀναφέροντες.*

were developed heaven, earth, ether, air, stars, fire, sea, animals, and plants. Thus Gregory in an important item agreed with and anticipated Augustine, namely, in asserting that potentially all things existed in the first creation, although they were not actually existent (77D).⁶⁷ The development of the world from these causes is not automatic, but is the working of the logos of each thing given it by God (72C); and Moses shows that the apparently natural sequences are in fact due to God's wisdom and direction by representing them as following God's commands (73A, 76B). The causes or logoi in Gregory's thought therefore are forms which determine both the constitution of things and the action and reproduction of individuals. He seems to have blended in this doctrine the Platonic ideas, the Aristotelian forms, and the Stoic seminal logoi.

The Stoics sometimes spoke of God as a spirit (*πνεῦμα*) pervading the whole material universe (*Plac.* I, 7, 33), an idea which seems to have been suggestive to the earlier Hexaemeral writers in commenting upon Gen. 1:2 and 2:7, even though the Stoic "spirit" was a material thing. We find mention of this Stoic doctrine.⁶⁸ Theophilus apparently conceives of the spirit of God in Gen. 1:2 as a wind or breath, but ascribes to it a life-giving power which nourishes the waters and through them the world;⁶⁹ if God should withhold it the world would perish. God's spirit encompasses about the whole world (I, 5, 16). There is perhaps a suggestion of Stoicism here,⁷⁰ together with the Old Testament conception of the wind as a mysterious and powerful agent of God.⁷¹ In the later writers, however, the "spirit of God" in Genesis is generally identified with the third member of the Trinity.

⁶⁷ Cf. H. F. Osborn, *From the Greeks to Darwin*, New York, 1908, 71. Gregory apparently was acquainted with Stoic teaching; cf. *De hom. op.* 157A, where he alludes to the theory that the heart is the seat of intelligence.

⁶⁸ Theophilus II, 4, 54; Athenagoras *Suppl.* 6, 32; 22, 108.

⁶⁹ II, 13, 94; 7, 22. Philo's conception, *De op. m.* 9, 10, is similar.

⁷⁰ Even clearer in Tatian *Or. con. Gr.*, who distinguishes between two varieties of spirit; the greater being the likeness of God, originally infused in man but lost through sin, the inferior being a creation of God that permeates matter; *op. cit.* 7, 12, 13, 20; cf. Athenagoras *Suppl.* 24; Aimé Puech, *Recherches sur le discours aux Grecs de Tatien*, Paris, 1903, 65.

⁷¹ W. R. Shoemaker in *Jour. Bib. Lit.* XXIII, 13 ff.

Other less important reminiscences of Stoicism are sometimes found in the Hexaemera. For example, Basil uses the Stoic argument that the world is perishable because its parts are destructible.⁷² Mention is also made, but always in a hostile spirit, of the periodical destruction of the world and the ultimate return of all things to exactly the same form and order.⁷³

It was of course inevitable that the educated Christians of the fourth century and later should come in contact with neo-Platonism, and it is not strange to find that they considered certain features of that philosophy worthy of adoption. In the Hexaemera there is evidence that the neo-Platonists inspired the tendency of the Latin theologians after Augustine to declare that God is outside of time and space, or even beyond attributes of any kind. The first clear reference to them is found in Basil's objection to the theory which regards God as the involuntary cause of the universe, as a body is of its shadow or an illuminating body of its brilliance.⁷⁴ Augustine however is the first of the commentators who was clearly influenced by neo-Platonism in an important way, and through him certain traces of neo-Platonism came into the Latin Hexaemera generally. The *De divisione naturae* of Johannes Scotus Erigena, which was affected by the pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita as well as by Augustine, and the *De mundi universitate* of Bernard of Tours, in which the world soul, as was remarked above, is derived from the Noys by the neo-Platonic device of emanation, are the most important of the works after Augustine which show the influence of the neo-Platonists.

Augustine's acquaintance with neo-Platonism is an admitted fact and has been the subject of investigation.⁷⁵ He himself declares in a much-quoted passage (*Conf.* VII, 9) that through the writings of the *Platonici*—quite certainly meaning the neo-

⁷² *Hex.* 9C; cf. Diog. Laer. VII, 141. This also occurs in Lucretius v, 235-46.

⁷³ Basil 73C; Bernard of Tours 32, 105; Augustine *DCD*, XII, 14.

⁷⁴ *Hex.* 17BC. Plotinus often spoke of the relations between the One and the rest of the universe in the manner which Basil reports; cf. Zeller III, 2, 552 and n. 2, 557 and n. 2.

⁷⁵ G. Loesche, *De Augustino Plotinizante*, Jena, 1880; L. Grandgeorge, *Saint Augustin et la néo-Platonisme*, Paris, 1896; Nourisson, *La philosophie de St. Augustin*, 1866, II, 102, 111; N. Bouillet, *Les ennéades de Plotin*, II, 555.

Platonists—he first came to understand the prooemium of John's gospel.⁷⁶ In his exegesis of the Biblical passages dealing with creation this knowledge of neo-Platonism shows itself especially in two ways, in his conception of God, and in his allegorical explanation of the days of creation as something different from natural days. The first point has been noted by the critics.⁷⁷ God—Father, Son, and Spirit—exists without beginning or end, outside of time and space⁷⁸ in an eternity in which there is no temporal or spatial movement, but all parts of it are ever present.⁷⁹ Without going to the extreme of the neo-Platonists and declaring that God is wholly without attributes, Augustine shows by his language that he borrowed suggestions from them. This may be seen from *Lit.* IV, 18, 34: *et ideo, dum ipse manet in se, quidquid ex illo est retorquet ad se, ut omnis creatura in se habeat naturae suae terminum, quo non sit quod ipse est, in illo autem quietis locum quo seruet quod ipsa est.* Herein he employs two neo-Platonic ideas, the *μόνη* or transcendent rest of God (*manet in se*) and the *ἐπιστροφή* of all things to the One (*retorquet ad se*).⁸⁰ Both are further employed in his exegesis of Genesis—the former to describe the seventh day's rest (*Lit.* IV, 18–19), which Augustine says for God had no beginning or end, and the latter in his discussion of the six days, as will presently appear.

In accordance with this definition of God's nature, Augustine denies that the working of God reported in the Scriptures is either temporal or spatial; all his thought and action are in the Word, including the commands and acts of creation.⁸¹ This view, which

⁷⁶ The translations of Victorinus were the medium of his knowledge of the neo-Platonists (*Conf.* VIII, 2).

⁷⁷ Grandgeorge, chap. II; Loesche 31 ff. Storz, *Die Philosophie des hl. Augustinus*, Freiburg, 1882, 182, wrongly judges that the tendency to define Deity by negation comes from the polemic against Manichaeism.

⁷⁸ *Lit.* VIII, 19: *dicimus itaque . . . deum . . . nec locorum uel finito uel infinito spatio contineri nec temporum uel finito uel infinito uolumine uariari.* Storz 183–84.

⁷⁹ *Conf.* XI, 13, 16: *sed praecedis omnia praeterita celsitudine semper praesentis aeternitatis.*

⁸⁰ The similarity of terminology may be seen by comparing Plotinus *Enn.* I, 7, 1: *δεῖ οὖν μένειν αὐτὸ* (sc. τὸ ἀγαθόν), *πρὸς αὐτὸ δὲ ἐπιστρέφειν πάντα, ὥσπερ κύκλον πρὸς κέντρον, ἀφ' οὗ πᾶσαι γραμμαί.*

⁸¹ *Lib. imp.* 5, 19; *Lit.* I, 2, 6; I, 5; *Conf.* XI, 7, 9.

logically follows from the character of his conception of Deity, is stated in *Lit.* I, 18, 36: *sed ante omnia meminerimus . . . non temporalibus quasi animi sui aut corporis motibus operari deum, sicut operatur homo uel angelus, sed aeternis atque incommutabilibus et stabilibus rationibus coaeterni sibi uerbi sui et quodam, ut ita dixerim, motu pariter coaeterni sancti spiritus sui.* The followers of Augustine in the middle ages often cited this passage with approval,⁸² and they accepted his doctrine that the commands and acts of Genesis are in the Word.⁸³ It is in these ways that the influence of Augustine's neo-Platonic tendencies was most felt in later times.

To justify his rejection of the ordinary belief that the world was created in six natural days Augustine devised an explanation of the days mentioned in Gen. 1 by an allegorical interpretation of the formulae of command that appear in the Biblical account.⁸⁴ The angels are the "heaven" of Gen. 1:1, and by the command "Let there be light" they are brought out of formlessness to an ordered life. The making of the light is their turning to the creator and formation out of formlessness. This state of illumination follows darkness; similarly, "morning" is the praise of God by the angelic light after "evening," that is, the recognition of its own nature. Each successive day up to the perfect number six⁸⁵ is a repetition of the first; the first evening is the knowledge which the light has of its own nature; the morning beginning the second day is its conversion to the creator, its praise of him and perception in the Word of the creation that is next to follow, in this case the firmament. This implies that the commands couched in the form *Fiat firmamentum* refer to the making in the Word of the creation

⁸² Vincent of Beauvais *Spec. hist.* I, 8; Peter Lombard II, 1, 2; Bandinus II, 1; Bruno 156B.

⁸³ Following *Lit.* II, 6, 14, they declare that the commands reported in Genesis are not actually spoken, but those beginning with *fiat* indicate an operation in and through the Word, and the formulae *et fecit deus* and *factum est ita* refer to a material creation not exceeding the bounds set in the Word. Cf. Beda *Hex.* 19A, *Com.* 195A; Strabus 67B; Hrabanus 450A; Angelomus 116D; Remi 55B; Rupert of Deutz 206D; Peter Lombard II, 13, 7; Bandinus II, 13; Honorius *Elucidarium* 1112C; Albertus Magnus IV, 73, 3; Peter Comestor 1057B (but also 1058D).

⁸⁴ The most detailed account is in *Lit.* IV, 22, 39; cf. also I, 3, 7 and II, 8, 16.

⁸⁵ On the perfection of this number, see *infra* p. 240. God could have created in one day, had he chosen, but on account of the perfection of six took that number; *Lit.* IV, 2, 2, and 6.

mentioned; the formula *Et sic est factum* refers to the recognition of this creation gained by the angels from the Word; and finally *Et fecit Deus* regularly means that the "light" perceives the creation *in ipsa natura*. Thereupon evening, the angels' knowledge of the creation last made, comes again, to be succeeded as before by morning, their conversion to the creator, praise of him, and information through the Word of the creation next to come.

Without doubt, the theory outlined above from *Lit.* IV, 22, 39, which is unique in the history of the Hexaemera, is suggested by the neo-Platonic systems of emanation, although to Augustine creation is not an emanation, but a real creation out of nothing. The similarities may be seen from a comparison of Plotinus, *Enn.* V, 2, 1, with the above. Plotinus says: *ὃν γὰρ τέλειον τῷ μηδὲν ζητεῖν μηδὲ ἔχειν μηδὲ δεῖσθαι, οἷον ὑπερερρῆ καὶ τὸ ὑπερπλήρες αὐτοῦ πεποίηκεν ἄλλο. τὸ δὲ γενόμενον εἰς αὐτὸ ἐπεστράφη καὶ ἐπληρώθη, καὶ ἐγένετο πρὸς αὐτὸ βλέπον, καὶ νοῦς οὗτος. καὶ ἡ μὲν πρὸς ἐκεῖνο στάσις αὐτοῦ τὸ ὃν ἐποίησεν, ἡ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸ θέα τὸν νοῦν.* In this account of the emanation of the Nous there are two moments, *ἐπιστροφή* and *στάσις*, and second, *θέα*; the first gives it existence and the second makes it *νοῦς*. In Augustine⁸⁶ we can parallel the *ἐπιστροφή* with *conuersio* (in the forms *conuertere* and *retorquere*): *στάσις* is not especially mentioned, but *θέα* is balanced by *contemplatio*, and as it produces *νοῦς*, so *contemplatio* produces *formatio*, which in the Augustinian context is a fair equivalent of *νοῦς*.

This unique theory of the meaning of the six days was adopted by some of the later Latin writers, but usually only in part. It was too speculative and difficult to appeal to the majority, who preferred to believe that the six days were really periods of time. Erigena, after Augustine, was most affected by neo-Platonism, which caused him to declare that God is beyond all attributes and even beyond the category of being.

The Epicureans were the object of the polemic against the

⁸⁶ Cf. in *Lit.* IV, 22, 39: . . . *sicut post tenebras facta est (sc. lux) ubi intellegitur a sua quadam informitate ad creatorem conuersa atque formata; ita et post uesperam fiat mane, cum post cognitionem suae propriae naturae, qua non est quod deus, refert se ad laudandam lucem, quod ipse deus est, cuius contemplatione formatur.* *Ibid.* I, 2, 17: *quae [sc. lux] nisi ad creatorem illuminanda conuerteretur, fluitaret informiter.* Also I, 4, 9; 5, 10; III, 20, 31. I am not aware that this parallelism has previously been pointed out.

notion that the world was automatically made (cf. Lucretius v, 187-94) and would naturally share the objections made against the theory that matter is eternal.⁸⁷

Neo-Pythagoreanism affected the Hexaemeral writers only in the transmission of the idea that certain virtues dwell in the several numbers—for example, that six is perfect, and for this reason the creative work was performed in six days, or that two is evil, because it transcends unity, and that, therefore, God failed to call the creations of the second day good.⁸⁸ This sort of symbolical interpretation of numbers was much employed by Philo, and through him passed into the Hexaemera. In the Middle Ages there was a revival of the use of topics of this kind.

Manichaeism gave rise to the polemic of Augustine and to certain topics of the Hexaemera, for example, the denial that the darkness spoken of in Gen. 1:2 is an entity and the principle of evil.⁸⁹

It has thus become evident that the commentators upon the creation narrative were deeply and essentially indebted to the Greek philosophers. To the old Hebrew account they added the great Platonic doctrine of an ideal plan underlying the foundation of the material world. Philo and the neo-Platonists confirmed their conviction that this plan was in the divine mind, and from the teachings of the Stoics they derived assistance in their explanation of the way in which God, according to the Mosaic account, worked upon chaotic matter to produce this world in all the perfection of its parts. Had Greek philosophy been non-existent it is certain that the commentaries on Genesis would have borne an entirely different character.

⁸⁷ Epicurus is expressly mentioned by Helinandus (*Chron.* I, *ap.* Vincent of Beauvais *Spec. nat.* I, 18). The probability that Aristotle was also an object of the polemics mentioned has been set forth above.

⁸⁸ Peter Lombard II, 14, 4; Bandinus II, 14.

⁸⁹ Philoponus accused Theodorus of Mopsuestia of saying that it was an entity (84 ff.). The usual explanation was that the darkness was simply absence of light; Basil 40C; Diodorus of Tarsus 1563B; Ambrose 138C; Philoponus 69 ff.; Theodoretus *ap.* Philop. 85, 17; Anastasius Sin. 859A; Augustine *Man.* I, 4, *Lib. imp.* 4, *Conf.* XII, 3; Greg. Nys. *Hex.* 81D; Severianus I, 5; pseudo-Eucherius 895A; Beda *Com.* 194B; Hugo of St. Victor 36A; Honorius *Hex.* 255B; Theodoretus *Qu. in Gen.* I, 7; Angelomus 115C; Peter Lombard II, 12, 3; Hugo of Amiens 1254C; Gennadius *ap.* MPG LXXXV, 1628A; Eucherius *Instructiones* 70, 9; Bruno 148B; Peter Comestor 1056C. Basil 37C (cf. Ambrose 139D) says that God could not create such an evil principle because things cannot arise from their opposites (for which cf. Dionysius Areop., MPG III, 716B).